

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(Currently amended)** A disposable diaper, comprising:
 - a diaper main body including a top sheet, a back sheet and an absorbent body disposed between said top sheet and back sheet;
 - a pair of side flaps respectively extending outwardly in a lateral direction of said diaper main body from respective side edge portions of said diaper main body, the side flaps being disposed between said top sheet and back sheet, each of said side flaps comprising an elastic sheet sandwiched between upper and lower non-woven fabric layers; and
 - a pair of fixing tapes each of which has a hook member, is directly attached to a surface of one of said side flaps in a vicinity of an outermost lateral edge of said side flap, and is folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap with said hook member facing said surface of said side flap and being releasably, temporarily fixed to an engaging region on the surface of said side flap, wherein
 - said engaging region, defined by a non-woven fabric that has no adhesive on said surface, comprises (a) an engaging portion directly, mechanically, releasably and non-adhesively engaged with said hook member, and (b) a non-engaging portion with which said hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap is directly contactable but can barely be engaged or cannot be engaged at all;
 - an area of the non-engaging portion that faces and is directly contactable with the hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap is larger than that of the engaging portion;
 - an entire area of said engaging portion is in a range of 5% to 50% of the entire area of said hook member;

said fixing tape comprises (i) a fixing tape substrate, (ii) said hook member provided on a surface of said fixing tape substrate, (iii) a gripping portion at one of opposite ends of the fixing tape substrate and adjacent to the hook member, and (iv) an attaching portion at the opposite end of the fixing tape substrate, said attaching portion being directly attached to said surface of said side flap;

said fixing tape is provided with ~~an opening~~ a rectangular slit in said attaching portion[.];

a portion of said surface of said side flap, as the engaging region for temporarily fixing the surface of said flap to the fixing tape, is being exposed through said ~~opening~~ rectangular slit and directly mechanically, non-adhesively engaged with said hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap;

said fixing tape substrate comprises a nonwoven fabric having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the engaging portion; and

the direct engagement between the engaging portion and the hook member is achieved at least by a portion of the hook member that is immediately adjacent the gripping portion due to the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap.

2-3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the engaging force of said engaging region with said hook member is in a range of 0.3 N/25mm to 2.2 N/25mm.

5. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said non-engaging portion has an engaging force with said hook member not greater than 2.2 N/25mm.

6-7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said hook

member of said fixing tape is a male engaging piece of a hook-and-loop fastener.

9-20. (canceled)

21. **(currently amended)** A disposable diaper, comprising:

a diaper main body including a topsheet, a backsheet and an absorbent body disposed between said topsheet and backsheet ;

a pair of side flaps respectively extending outwardly from an end portion of said diaper main body in a lateral direction of said diaper main body; and

a pair of fixing tapes each being directly attached to a surface of one of said side flaps in a vicinity of an outermost lateral edge of said side flap and being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the side flap;

wherein

said fixing tape is provided with a hook member;

each said side flap and the respective fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the side flap are releasably engaged with each other through the hook member;

an engaging region is provided on the surface of each said side flap where the hook member of the respective fixing tape is releasably engageable for temporarily fixing said fixing tape to said side flap before use, said engaging region being defined by a non-woven fabric that has no adhesive on said surface and comprising

an engaging portion with which said hook member of the respective fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the side flap is directly, mechanically and non-adhesively engaged; and

a non-engaging portion with which the hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap is directly contactable but has either a low engaging force or no engaging force at all, wherein the non-engaging portion has a larger area that faces and is directly contactable with

the hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the side flap than the engaging portion;

an entire area of said engaging portion is in a range of 5% to 50% of the entire area of said hook member;

said fixing tape comprises (i) a fixing tape substrate, (ii) said hook member provided on a surface of said fixing tape substrate, (iii) a gripping portion at one of opposite ends of the fixing tape substrate and adjacent to the hook member, and (iv) an attaching portion at the opposite end of the fixing tape substrate, said attaching portion being directly attached to said surface of said side flap;

said fixing tape is provided with ~~an opening in a slit extending through~~ said attaching portion, a portion of said surface of said side flap, as the engaging region for temporarily fixing the surface of said flap to the fixing tape, is being exposed through said ~~opening slit~~ and directly mechanically, non-adhesively engaged with said hook member of the fixing tape being folded along the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap; and

said fixing tape substrate comprises a nonwoven fabric having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the engaging portion.

22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein the engaging force of said engaging region with said hook member is in a range of 0.3 N/25mm to 2.2 N/25mm.

24. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said non-engaging portion has an engaging force with said hook member not greater than 2.2 N/25mm.

25. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said hook member of said fixing tape is a male engaging piece of a hook-and-loop fastener.

26-31. (canceled)

32. (previously presented) A disposable diaper, comprising:

a diaper main body including a top sheet, a back sheet and an absorbent body disposed between said top sheet and back sheet;

a pair of side flaps respectively extending outwardly in a lateral direction of said diaper main body from respective side edge portions of said diaper main body, each of the side flaps having opposite inner and outer surfaces adapted to face toward and away from a wearer, respectively, when the diaper is being worn on the wearer; and

a pair of fixing tapes each comprising:

a fixing tape substrate having opposite ends,

a hook member on said fixing tape substrate,

a gripping portion defined by one of opposite ends of the fixing tape substrate and adjacent to the hook member, and

an attaching portion defined by the opposite end of the fixing tape substrate, said attaching portion being directly attached to the inner surface of one of said side flaps in a vicinity of an outermost lateral edge of said side flap;

wherein

said fixing tape is folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap with said hook member facing said inner surface of said side flap,

the fixing tape substrate has an opening in said attaching portion,

a first portion of the inner surface of the respective side flap is exposed through said opening and is directly mechanically, non-adhesively, releasably engaged with said hook member to temporarily fix the folded fixing tape to the inner surface of said side flap,

said fixing tape substrate has a second portion being directly contactable with

said hook member of the folded fixing tape and having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the first portion.

33. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 32, wherein the engaging force of said first portion with said hook member is in a range of 0.3 N/25mm to 2.2 N/25mm.

34. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 33, wherein said second portion has an engaging force with said hook member not greater than 2.2 N/25mm.

35. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 32, wherein the inner surface of each said side flap further comprises a third portion outside the opening and outside a boundary of the attaching portion of the respective fixing tape;
said third portion is directly mechanically, non-adhesively, releasably engaged with said hook member of the respective, folded fixing tape.

36. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 35, wherein said third portion is directly mechanically, non-adhesively, releasably engaged with an innermost portion of said hook member that is immediately adjacent said gripping portion.

37. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 36, wherein said third portion is directly mechanically, non-adhesively, releasably engaged with said hook member of the respective, folded fixing tape with an engaging force greater than that of the second portion.

38. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 37, wherein an entire area of the second portion is greater than that of the third portion.

39. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 38, wherein an entire area of said third portion is in a range of 5% to 50% of the entire area of said hook member.

40. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 37, wherein said first portion is located, in the lateral direction, between said third portion and the outermost lateral edge of the respective side flap.